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## **News Release**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Colorado man charged for assaulting flight attendant**

A 41-year-old Colorado Springs, Colo., man was charged by the United States Attorney's Office Dec. 3 in Minneapolis for allegedly assaulting a Northwest Airlines flight attendant during an Oct. 27, 2007, flight into the Twin Cities.

Gregory Thomas Abeyta was charged with one count of misdemeanor simple assault. He was charged in federal court because the offense allegedly occurred onboard an aircraft.

According to an FBI affidavit, Abeyta was a passenger on a Northwest Airlines flight from Colorado Springs to the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport in Bloomington. The affidavit stated that Abeyta was served alcoholic beverages, and flight attendants stopped serving him drinks due to his behavior, comments and demeanor.

Despite being cut off from being served, Abeyta continued to ask for additional alcoholic beverages, and began yelling profanities at the flight attendants. According to the affidavit, one of the attendants sat down next to Abeyta in an attempt to calm him down, but was instead allegedly shoved twice by Abeyta.

Several passengers assisted flight attendants with placing flex-cuffs on Abeyta's hands and wrists to restrain him for the duration of the flight. The affidavit stated that Abeyta pushed, shoved and took swings at flight attendants and passengers, while shouting obscenities. Upon arrival at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, Abeyta was escorted off of the aircraft by airport police department officers.

If convicted, Abeyta faces a potential maximum penalty of six months in prison and a \$5,000 fine. All sentences are determined by a federal district court judge. This case is the result of an investigation by the FBI and the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport Police Department, and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Lisa D. Kirkpatrick.